(d) the details of the progress made to implement this insurance scheme?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI NAMO NARAIN MEENA): (a) There is no proposal under consideration of the Ministry to provide insurance cover for the damage caused by wild animals

(b) to (d) Do not arise.

Use of plastic bags

†1096. SHRI JAI PARKASH AGGARWAL:
DR. PRABHA THAKUR:

Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the use of plastic bags is harmful to the environment and health;

(b) whether plastic bags turns fertile land into barren land and pollute water; and

(c) if so, the steps being taken by the Government to check production and use of plastic bags?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI NAMO NARAIN MEENA): (a) and (b) Plastic (Polymers) are petroleum-products comprising of long-chain hydrocarbons. They are chemically inert or neutral and so used for the manufacture of a large number of consumer items. They can also be recycled. Plastics by themselves are not harmful. Only the indiscriminate littering of plastics and environmentally unsound recycling practices has the potential to cause adverse impacts on environment.

(c) To prohibit the use of recycled plastic for packaging of foodstuffs and to encourage proper waste collection, the Government has brought out the Plastics Manufacture and Usage Rules, 1999 as amended in 2003. These rules prohibit the use of recycled plastic bags for storing, carrying, dispensing, or packaging of foodstuffs. Also, these rules prohibit the

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.

manufacture, stocking, distribution or selling of carry bags made of virgin/ recycled plastics, which are below 8x12 inches in size and 20 microns in thickness.

Polluted Cities in the country

†1097. SHRI JAI PARKASH AGGARWAL: Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state:

(a) the names of the most polluted cities in India in the pollution level order and their position among the polluted cities of the world;

(b) the present level of pollution in each city;

(c) whether Government have conducted or propose to conduct any study in this regard; and

(d) the steps taken by Government till date to check the increasing pollution in cities during the last three years?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI NAMO NARAIN MEENA): (a) and (b) As per the 2005 Environmental Sustainability Index (ESI) the ranking of India is at 101 position out of 146 countries. The Central Pollution Control Board (CPCB) is executing a nation-wise programme of ambient air quality monitoring known as National Air Quality Monitoring Programme (NAMP). Based on the monitoring of ambient air quality, fifty-one (51) non-attainment cities have been identified in the country in which the prescribed Respirable Particulate Matter (RSPM) levels, specified under the National Ambient Air Quality Standards (NAAQS), are not met. The list of cities and their pollution level is annexed in the Statement (*See* below).

(c) The Central Pollution Control Board has an on-going nation-wide programme of water quality and ambient air quality monitoring.

(d) The following steps have been taken for control of pollution in the country;

(i) A road map upto 2010 has been laid down by the Expert Committee on Auto Fuel Policy for controlling Vehicular pollution from both new as well as in-use vehicles all over the country;

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.